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Mr. Lawrence R. Houston
General Counsel

16 October 1946

Chief, Fiscal Division

Per Diem Payments to Overseas Personnel
Temporarily Stationed in Washington
Prior to Departure

A further review of the problems which have been recently discussed in connection with the propriety of making per diem payments to personnel who are on temporary duty in Washington in connection with processing and training prior to dispatch abroad and, as a result thereof, the following recommendations are made:

1. Effective upon entrance on duty in Washington, a per diem payment of \$6 be made for the first 30 days;
2. For the second 30 days a per diem payment of \$4 be made;
3. No payments be made after the sixtieth day;
4. All per diem payments be made from unvouchered funds.

It appears that the making of per diem payments under existing regulations is in accord with the opinion of most officials and is not contradictory to any specific statutes or government policies. Existing law does permit the dispatch of personnel to their foreign station although Public Law No. 600 does not appear to contemplate that temporary duty enroute would be performed. A number of decisions of the Comptroller General indicate that it is proper to make per diem payments to an employee if he is officially ordered to perform temporary duty at a certain location while enroute to what might technically be termed his first official station. The question of the traveler being transported via circuitous route would not appear to jeopardize the granting of per diem payments while in Washington in accordance with the above recommendations, nor the payment of transportation from Washington to points abroad which might be at a greater cost than from the residence of the employee.

Since under present plans and policies practically all - if not all - employees going abroad will be placed on unvouchered funds, it appears advisable to make the determination that all payments for temporary duty while in Washington, D. C. for personnel being employed for overseas duty, be made from unvouchered funds; since, in any event, the employment of such individuals at their foreign post will

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involve security problems which could justify the use of confidential funds, and the technicalities involved in justifying the issuance of travel authorizations and the handling of such payments on vouchered funds would possibly place the agency in an untenable position from a security viewpoint. In any event, the number of personnel being dispatched abroad on vouchered funds will be restricted. In those instances where personnel are being dispatched abroad from temporary duty their official station would be Washington, D.C. and they, of course, would not be entitled to per diem payments under the above recommendations.

It is the opinion of the undersigned that if it definitely becomes necessary in the future, per diem allowances could be granted to vouchered personnel being dispatched abroad while on temporary duty in Washington, D. C. However, the fact that we have certain security requirements, including the mandatory assessment school attendance, it is difficult to explain to the General Accounting Office auditors or other government officials how and why certain travel and/or temporary duty is performed in Washington, D. C. in relation to the making of per diem payments effective upon date of appointment. It, therefore, appears advisable that in the few cases which may occur with respect to vouchered personnel the allowances while on temporary duty in Washington be paid from special funds in the same manner as certain payments which are now authorized in connection with the attendance at the assessment school.

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Chief, Fiscal Division

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Mr. Saunders

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